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MYSTERIES OF THE MASS

IN

REASONED PRAYERS

Imprimi potest:

J. WRIGHT, S.J.,
Praep. Prov. Angl.

Imprimatur:

EDM. CAN. SURMONT,
Vic. Gen.

Westmonasterii,
die 3 Nov. 1915.

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MYSTERIES OF THE MASS IN REASONED PRAYERS

BY

FATHER W. ROCHE, S.J.

Author of
"The House and Table of God"
"A Child's Prayers to Jesus"

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

FIFTH IMPRESSION

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
FOURTH AVENUE & 30th STREET, NEW YORK
BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS
1918

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TO

THE KNIGHTS

OF THE

BLESSED SACRAMENT

INTRODUCTION

THESE prayers are not poetry or verse of any kind, but plain continuous prose, though printed in broken lines.

They are printed in this form to remind the reader to go slowly, to pause frequently, to break up and as it were to punctuate his thought in order that each idea may have its due. St. Ignatius' Third Method of Prayer, in which slow and measured breathing regulates the pace, suggests this device.

The prayers, ritual uses and symbols in the Mass are very numerous and of great variety. To some minds they are distracting, worrying even, in their multiplicity, changes and quick succession. The lay-folk often cannot keep pace with the Priest and devotion suffers in the attempt to secure exact correspondence of their prayers, point to point, with his.

This is the case especially with slow-moving and meditative minds that, gazing upon truth and wondering, are soothed and nourished chiefly by the sense of Mystery. The forms of prayer here suggested will meet their need. People of a more formal and business-like habit of mind, who can be quick and brisk in devotions as in other things, may yet find their prayers improved by the art of lingering on the meaning of what they say. Without this, the inward and reflex effect that prayer should have upon ourselves is in great measure forfeited. We need to weigh and ponder in the heart the deep things of God. The very deepest, the most profound and hidden, press close upon us in great number in the Holy Mass. They are grouped

together in this little book and summarised under four divine facts or mysteries, each essential to the spirit of Christian worship. By thus reducing the many to four leading master-thoughts, the understanding heart may dwell with more leisure upon the inner motives of the liturgy; and may attain a clearer insight into the value of the priest's prayers, and a fuller sympathy with the inwardness of his acts at the Altar, than by attending to every detail and repeating exactly the priest's actual words. The intention and meaning of Sacrifice, and the mysteries and human needs that underlie and inspire the liturgical prayers and ceremonies of the Mass, will in this way be brought into relief.

The prayers here suggested are for the most part nothing more than enlargements and interpretations of those of the Missal, though in no sense translations. Each embodies enough matter for a meditation or even for a doctrinal instruction; and except at a High Mass it is not supposed that all may be used on a single occasion.

As the treatment is purely devotional, no attempt is made to adjust the thought to any antiquarian lore or critical erudition, but only to religion and theology. If further explanation is desired on any point here too briefly or obscurely suggested, it may be found in a companion volume entitled *The Bread upon the Altar*, which is in preparation.

The following are the four compendious Mysteries under which the whole Mass-liturgy is here summed up and divided:

The first, the Mystery of God's mercy, drawing us to contrition and trust in Him. The prayers and ceremonies to the end of the *Gloria* come under this.

The second, the Mystery of God's revelation which calls out our best faculty of faith to meet His divine message. This takes in the Collects, Epistles, Gospel and Creed.

The third is the Mystery of Sacrifice, which implies a complete surrender of our life to the purposes of God, in union with the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This covers the Offertory and Action of the Canon.

The fourth, the Mystery of Union with God through Communion with the Sacred Humanity of our Blessed Lord.

Everyone assisting in the right spirit at Holy Mass should desire to complete the act by Holy Communion. This may be taken as God's answer to their self-oblation. They have offered and given themselves to Him, in union with His Son. He would in return give Himself to them through the same Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and thus ratify and establish the union. This union with God is the end and object of Sacrifice, and indeed of life itself.

When Holy Communion cannot be taken sacramentally it should be received spiritually by desire and faith. The prayers here suggested before Holy Communion may be used even when we do not receive, in view of a future Communion however distant and in preparation for it, and those that follow may be used with reference to past Communions whose effects should still live in us somehow and should be revived by reflection and prayer at every Mass.

Even those who like to limit their prayers to the exact words of the Missal with its daily changes, will find in the memory of the fundamental Mysteries here emphasized a sustaining undercurrent of thought and desire to accompany and swell the meaning of their vocal prayers. For indeed these mysteries, and the corresponding cravings of man's heart, are the hidden fountain-heads from which the Mass prayers, in the first instance, welled up and took shape and form in words and ritual acts.

Prefixed to the Mass devotions are some preparatory prayers touching the significance of Sacrifice, and the four ends or intentions for which it is offered.

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Preparatory Prayers

Preparatory Prayers

THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST WITH HIS CHURCH

The Mass is not a private prayer of mine
such as I can say at home,
nor the public prayer of pious people.
It is the mystery of Our Lord's own supplication,
His perfect prayer of self-oblation,
adoration and thanksgiving
in which I take a part.
It is then more than words and wishes,
more than hymns of praise,
more than *asking* things of God.
It is a giving, an offering, a sacrifice.
Whosoever offers sacrifice offers self:
the offerer and the victim must
somehow be one.

So I am here to give rather than to get,
to fulfil a duty,
to pay a debt,
to render homage,
to satisfy the claims and rights of God,
my Sovereign Lord, Creator, King of Kings.

This I can never do alone,
I am not fit.
But do it I can most perfectly
in this Holy Mass
with Jesus my Saviour,
through Whom are given
to God all glory, worship, honour, thanks,
and *to me* continued mercy, a Father's love and guidance,
and with that all best things.
Amen.

THE MEANING OF SACRIFICE

O Sovereign Lord, Creator of all things,
because Thou art what Thou art
and I am little I,
therefore should I offer *sacrifice* to Thee.
No act or offering short of sacrifice
can express my obligations and my duties
or Thy rights over me.
No other act can be so rich in meaning,
none so much my own and so complete;
therefore sacrifice is due from me to Thee.
It is the best, the highest act I can perform,
and my whole nature, my full self is in it,
therefore it is reserved to Thee alone.

Sacrifice is Thine, my God, and Thine exclusively
because it rises from my deepest self,
pervades, affects me through and through,
involving all the substance of my soul
in absolute surrender unto Thee.
To others I may give mere parts
or fragments of myself,
words, deeds, affections, thoughts,
and only unto Thee my total self, my all,
because Thou alone art God.

But
when I think
how good and wonderful are Thy works,
O Lord God Almighty,
how just, how high, how holy
are all Thy ways,
how exalted Thy nature, how infinite Thy power,
and how I am
but dust and ashes, frail and weak,
wayward also and worn with sin,
I dare not hold up to heaven and offer to Thee
so poor, so spoilt a thing as I.
Therefore I turn to that divine love
Which opened wide its arms to me on Calvary,
and still holds them open in the Mass,
to Thy beloved Son, my Mediator, I turn,
to Him who drew me and took me to Himself upon the Cross
and made me His,
blending and mingling as water with ruddy wine
my poor life with His own,
so that together we two are one.
To Him I turn, in Him I trust, with Him I stand identified.
Look then upon Him, and me in Him
and not on me apart.
See His worth, not my demerit,
see His goodness, not my sin,
see His perfection, not my deficiency,
and accept from me through Him and with Him
the oblation of myself.
Amen.

FIRST MOTIVE OF SACRIFICE

TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND ADORE GOD

To Thee, Almighty, Eternal God,
I confess that sacrifice is due
as a recognition of Thy Sovereign Majesty,
which is for ever, everywhere supreme,
exclusive and without a rival.
Thou canst not abdicate Thy throne
nor fail to urge Thy claims,
and to require our homage.
This homage
is our essential good,
our first duty,
therefore Thou must hold us to it
lest we be wanting to ourselves and Thee.
I am Thy creature—we are all Thine,
as also the earth and the heavens are wholly Thine.
We submit ourselves and all we have
to Thee our Lord and God.
From Thee we come,
to Thee we must return.
Thou hast made us
and re-made us.
Of Thee we are twice born,
first of Thy creative love,
then born anew of Thy love
in torture on the Cross.

I cannot pay my debts and dues
by any talents I possess,
so take and seize my bankrupt self
and set me to Thy service only,
letting me no more live or work
for my own gain apart from Thee.
I rejoice that through Thy Son,
my Mediator
in this Holy Mass,
I can most worthily acknowledge and confess
Thine absolute authority
over life and death and everything,
and that I can by Him, in Him, with Him,
dedicate myself to Thee.
Amen.

SECOND MOTIVE OF SACRIFICE

TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD

Thy love, Thy love has made me,
O great all-holy God.
Thy love has placed me in this world,
full of things pleasing, bright and beautiful—
all tokens of Thy hidden presence,
all telling me of Thee,
all speaking to me of Thy love.
I thank Thee for Thy gifts,
I thank Thee for Thy love.
I will be grateful always in my heart,
I will often thank Thee openly.

Now I offer Thee this Holy Mass
to confess Thy goodness,
to acknowledge my debts,
to express my gratitude,
to tell Thee that I thank Thee.
Here I give Thee most perfect thanks,
not with words and feelings only,
but by this adorable Sacrifice
most pleasing in Thy sight.

I have other things to thank Thee for,
better things than the best of the earth,
Thy gifts from the Heaven of Heavens,
Thy graces and favours to my soul.
With all my heart I thank Thee
that Thou hast sent Thy Son to us
to live here
and show us how to live,
to suffer here
and show us how to suffer,
to die here
and show us how to die.
With my whole heart I thank Thee
that He endured our life,
shared our exile,
bore our sorrows,
carried our griefs:
that He was obedient that we might obey,
that He suffered that we might be saved.
I thank Thee
that He made the Mass
to be the source of every blessing,
the payment of every debt to Thee:
also the channel through which
His life-blood should run into mine,
making our two lives one
in Thee.
Amen.

THIRD MOTIVE OF SACRIFICE

TO ASK PARDON FOR SIN

O most merciful God and Father,
look down with pity upon me a sinner
and accept this atoning Sacrifice
which I now offer
to repair the evil I have done,
and to make up for all the good I have failed to do.
I confess against myself and am sorry
that I have not honoured and trusted Thee as I should,
nor allowed Thee, My Father,
to determine my life and conduct;
that I have used Thy things
without reference to Thee:
that I have sought to please myself and not Thee,
to go my own way and not Thine,
though I knew Thy claims
and my duty.
On this altar, by this Sacrifice
Jesus pleads for me, "Father forgive."
Hear Him and pardon me.

Jesus thirsts for my salvation:
forgive me and save.
Jesus dies that I may live:
let not His death be for me in vain.
I plead His merits, most merciful Father,
I shield myself behind Him.
I come to Thee not alone
but in His close company,
Who is my Brother, my Redeemer
and Thy Beloved Son.
As one with Him, unworthy though I be,
I put myself into Thy Hands,
into the hands of Thy creative love,
knowing that, for His Name's sake,
and the sake of this sublime Sacrifice,
Thou wilt receive and embrace me.
Thy love, O Father, is ever greater than my sins,
and Thou art, Thy very self, in Christ our Saviour,
reconciling sinful man unto Thyself.
Amen.

FOURTH MOTIVE OF SACRIFICE

TO ASK GOD'S FAVOUR AND BLESSING

Most loving Father,
the Source of every good,
of life and health and beauty,
and the fountain of supernal grace,
Thou canst refuse me nothing,
since Thou dost here give Thy Son.
What then shall I ask through Him?
What do I want?
I know not what I truly want
nor which of my seeming wants
are worth supplying.
I would leave all, O Lord, to Thee
and accept Thy choice,
begging only to do Thy will.
Thou knowest and foreseest all,
I know so little that I dare not choose.
Ask me not then what more I want
beyond Thy Son my Saviour Jesus,
Whom I already have.
Give Him to me more and more
and let me feel His burning love
in mind, heart, and daily influence.
Feed me, strengthen me
by His most precious Body and Blood,
and give Thyself to me together with the Holy Ghost,
with Jesus
in this sweet Sacrament.
Thus having all I should be satisfied.
Amen.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE MASS

I

The Mystery of God's Mercy

I

The Mystery of God's Mercy

Introibo

DRAW NEAR THE ALTAR

I have come to the house of God,
I kneel before the altar,
before the place on which is done
a thing most holy,
an act most high,
a secret act, a mystery,
an act which is a sacrifice,
the sacrifice of the Son of God,
my Lord Jesus Christ.
He is Himself the Victim veiled,
He is the hidden Priest.
He is to be offered and to offer Himself
and renew within the Host
the awful death of Calvary.
This He does as one with me and for my sake.
I now come humbly to this altar of God,
with reverence and great awe,
slowly and in silence,
as I would approach the Cross on Calvary.
Let me not be a passive spectator
of this sublime drama of Redemption,
but let me play my part devoutly,
since it is I whom it must save.
Amen.

Judica Me

BE NOT AFRAID TO APPROACH GOD

Judge me, O God, and take my part
against the sinful world;
deliver me from all
that is deceitful and perverse.
Thou, O Lord, art my source of strength,
the fortress and stronghold of my soul.
Why then should I be despondent?
why be afraid
though temptations around torment me?
Send forth anew, O Lord, Thy light and Thy truth
that I may trust
Thy presence and Thy promises.
These have led me safely through infancy and youth,
these have brought me now
to the hill of Thy holy Altar.
Therefore I will draw near with confidence
to this tabernacle of God—unto God Himself,
who gives to the young the joy of life,
and to my heart's own lips the voice of praise.
O my soul, why art thou diffident?
how canst thou be cast down
seeing the presence and the fidelity of God
who is here to save and shield you?
Him only then, Him alone will I trust and praise for ever.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end.
Yes, I will go even unto the Altar of God,
unto God the author of happiness and life;
for my hope and help is the Lord Himself
who made the heavens and the earth.
Amen.

Confiteor Deo

BY CONFESSION OF SIN PREPARE FOR SACRIFICE

I

I confess to God who made me,
to God who loves me,
to God who suffered for me,
to God who is always thinking of me and blessing me,
to God most holy,
I confess that I have sinned,
sinned only against Him.
Others I have sought to please,
but to God I have been unjust, ungrateful
I confess with shame
that I do not always what He asks
but only what I want myself,
that often I do what He dislikes.
I confess
I have not kept Him in my mind
nor loved Him always in my heart,
nor thanked Him for His gifts,
nor used His things aright.
I know that I belong to Him,
that my mind and will are His,
that my eyes are His,
and my hands and my tongue and my ears
and all my senses.
He trusts these gifts to me
and lets me freely use them.
I confess I have not always used them well.
I confess I have sometimes used them ill.
I confess I have sinned through my fault.

Also I confess
to our Lady, the Mother of all Christians,
that I have been no credit to her,
nor pleased her
as a child should please its mother.
Pray for me, dear Mother, pray that I may be
more obedient to God,
more submissive to His providence,
more grateful to Our Lord, Thy Son,
more humble, more sweet-natured, more simple,
more sorry for all my sins.
I confess
to St. Michael and all the angels,
to St. John, St. Peter and St. Paul,
to all the men and women saints of God,
to all the children saints in heaven,
that I am not worthy of their love,
not worthy to be their companion,
till God has pardoned
all my sins, omissions, negligences,
and by His Son's most Precious Blood
has washed my soul whiter than snow
and arrayed it in unspotted robes of grace.
Pray for me, all ye saints,
that as God has pardoned you for the sake of Jesus
He may likewise pardon me,
that as He has renewed your once ruined natures
He may also restore mine,
so that I may begin to serve,
with all my strength and all my mind and all my heart,
Him whose mercy exceeds my misery,
whose love is ever greater than my sins.
Pray, pray
that by the grace and power of this Holy Sacrifice
no drop of the Precious Blood of Jesus
may be shed in vain for me.
Amen.

Misereatur Deus

BE SORRY FOR SIN AND ASK PARDON

I own my sins, O my God, and my sinfulness,
and that I am not worthy
to appear in Thy sight
or to take part in this most Holy Sacrifice;
I am ashamed and very sorry
that I have displeased Thee,
my all-loving gracious Creator,
my most devoted Father.
Turn not away from me Thy face
but look with compassion
on me,
a tiny work of Thine own Hands
though spoilt by sin.
Take away the sin, my God, and save Thy creature,
created that its own good should be Thy glory.
Take away my sin, in pity for me,
and for the sake of Thy Son Jesus
from whom I would not be separated,
not for all the world,
and in whose redeeming Sacrifice
I place my safety and salvation.
Be merciful then, O Almighty God,
and forgiving my sins
make me ready for this Sacrifice.
Most merciful and gracious Lord,
grant us all pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins.
Amen.

Aufer a Nobis

PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS THROUGH JESUS

Turn, O God, Thy Face towards us
and give us new life,
that Thy people may rejoice in Thee.
Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy,
and grant us Thy Salvation.
Hear our prayer
and let our cry reach Thee from the depths.
Take away from us, we beseech Thee, O Lord,
our iniquities,
take them away,
that we may be able to enter into this Holy of Holies
with minds pure and clean.
O most merciful and gracious Father,
look on me with eyes of pity,
for the sake of Jesus Thy Son, my Saviour,
who would unite me to Himself
in the action of this Sacrifice.
Take away all my sins,
all slothful, distracting thoughts,
that I may be less unworthy
to be associated with Him
in this pure oblation
most acceptable to Thee.
Amen.

Per Merita Sanctorum

PRAYER FOR PARDON AS ONE WITH THE SAINTS

Be Thou, my God, indulgent with me,
and of Thy mercy
pardon me my sins,
if not for the sake of my unworthy self,
then for the sake of Thy dear Saints, my brethren,
whose Relics are here
hidden, sealed, enclosed within the secret shrine
upon the altar;
and for the sake too of all Saints in heaven,
my friends and patrons,
whom I love and who love me.
For their sakes, for their merits and prayers,
be indulgent and merciful to me.
Make me one with Jesus as they are one,
and as their Relics are enshrined and sealed
within the altar-stone,
which is the anointed symbol of His wounded Body,
so enfold and enclose my heart within His heart,
and my life within His Body glorified,
mystical and immortal,
that being therein dead to worldliness and sin
I may live always to Thee
in charity and faith and hope.
Amen.

Kyrie Eleison

THE HEART'S URGENT SUPPLICATION

Lord have mercy on us,
on me and on my parents.
Christ have mercy on us,
on me and on my friends.
Lord have mercy on us,
on me and on the people here.
Christ have mercy on us,
on me and on all the world.
Lord have mercy on us.
Christ have mercy on us,
pity us, help us,
save us from all sin,
Grant us every grace
through this ineffable and sublime Sacrifice.
Amen.

Gloria in Excelsis

HYMN OF PRAISE AND ACCLAMATION

Glory be to God on high,
and on earth peace to men of good will.
We praise Thee,
we adore Thee,
we bless thee,
we glorify Thee.
We give Thee thanks for Thy great glory,
O Lord God, heavenly King,
God the Father almighty.
O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son:
O Lord God,
Lamb of God,
Son of the Father,
who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us:
who takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayers:
who sittest at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For Thou alone art holy, Thou alone art Lord,
Thou alone art most high,
O Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Ghost,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

II

The Mystery of God's Message

II

The Mystery of God's Message

Oremus

THE COLLECT

A COMMON PRAYER FOR ALL PRESENT

O God who givest light to every man,
illumine us anew
with increase of faith and understanding.
Cast out of our minds
all unbecoming thoughts,
all false and crooked reasonings.
Banish from our hearts
all pride and hardness and all perverse desires.
Bestow on us such protective grace
that no harm may happen to our souls,
that every ill may be turned to good,
and our hearts be full of dutiful and holy love.
Enable us to take up our cross daily
and follow in the footsteps of our loving Saviour,
in fellowship with all Thy saints,
whose prayers we beg,
whose intercession we implore,
through the same Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Pleni sunt cœli et terra gloria ejus

THE HIDDEN GOD REVEALED

Like the all-mothering air, O God,
is Thy presence,
sustaining, life-giving, caressing, unseen;
all things are always being made by Thee,
and nothing is ever turned out of Thy hands
as done with and finished.
Thou art ever holding the seas in the hollow of Thy Hand,
and Thy fingers are ever fashioning
fresh forms of life.
By the things that Thou makest
Thou dost reveal Thy invisible attributes.
The beauty of Thy mind and its order and wisdom,
and the love of Thy heart and Thy sweetness
and Thy eternal Power and Godhead
are all clearly seen in Thy creatures,—
in Thy creatures that have not been spoilt by sin.

O Thou, my God, who commandest
light to shine out of darkness,
and callest forth beauty and life from nothingness,
open Thou the eyes of my mind
and the ears of my heart,
that I may behold and hearken to
Thy fuller Self-revelation through Thine own Eternal Son,
who is the effulgence of Thy Glory,
the express image of Thy Substance,
as light is of light.

Always, indeed, O Lord God Almighty,
Thou hast loved man and been mindful of him,
and from the first Thou didst converse with him,—
with Adam and Eve, with patriarchs of old;
and in sundry times and in divers manners
didst speak in times past
by the prophets.
But in these our days, O God, Thou hast spoken to us
by Thy Son—
Thy Son and the Son of Mary, Jesus our Lord,
who came down from Thy bosom to us
to make Thee known and to manifest Thy love
in ways and terms of human life.

Let me listen and hear with joy
the news He brings from Thee,
that I may learn Thy will.
Let me eagerly accept Thy teaching
from the words of Jesus in the Gospels,
from the letters of His Apostles,
and from the lips of His living Church.
Speak, Lord God Almighty, through these to me,
through this ministry that can be seen and heard,
that can safeguard and command
lest I misunderstand Thy voice within my soul
and deceive myself,
taking my own will and fancy to be
Thy wisdom.
Amen.

THE EPISTLE

WORDS OF ST. PETER, ST. PAUL AND ST. JOHN

The desire of money is the root of all evils;
which some coveting
have erred from the faith
and have entangled themselves in many sorows.
But thou
fly these things
and pursue justice, holiness, faith, charity, patience.
Fight the good fight of faith.
Lay hold of Eternal Life whereunto you are called.
Keep the Commandments without spot,
blameless,
unto the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ,
whom not having seen you love:
in whom also now, though you see Him not,
you believe,
and believing shall rejoice with joy unspeakable.
Let us love God because God first hath loved us.
And we know the kind of love God hath, by this
that He laid down His life
for us.
So therefore ought we in turn to lay down our lives
for the brethren.
How then doth the love of God abide in him
who, having the substance of this world,
shall see his brother in need
and shall shut up his heart from him?
Be not surprised if the world dislike you,
for you are of God
and not of the world.

AFTER THE EPISTLE

Let me take this teaching to my heart,
that I may never be absorbed
by business wholly of the earth,
nor duped and fooled by man's proud show,
nor blind to that far richer world
that lies around, so near, so close,
yet seems so far away because invisible.
Into that bright and beauteous world
that knows no decay nor death,
nor dearth of any good,
Thy Body,
my sweet Jesus,
flesh and blood like mine,
did rise, and ascend, and enter fully,
freed from the restraints and miseries of our little earth.
Into that heavenly world would I now pass
and follow Thee in spirit
and be with Thee in hope and love.
May my thoughts and will
soar skywards always
and move upon the holy mountains of the Lord,
that the joy bells of Heaven may echo in my heart,
and in my mind be mirrored its purity and peace.
Amen.

THE GOSPEL

WORDS OF OUR BLESSED LORD

God so loved the world
as to give His only-begotten Son,
that whosoever believeth in Him
may not perish,
but may have Life Everlasting.
For God sent not His Son into the world
to judge the world,
but that the world may be saved
by Him.
My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven,
the Bread of God,
which cometh down from heaven
and giveth life to the world.
I am the Bread of Life.
I am the Living Bread.
I came down from Heaven.
If any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever.
And the Bread which I shall give
is My Flesh,
for the life of the world.
Amen, Amen, I say to you,
Except you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man
and drink His Blood
you shall not have Life in you.
He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood,
hath Everlasting Life,
and I will raise him up in the last day.
He that eateth Me the same also shall live by Me.
He abideth in Me and I in Him.
As I live by the Father
so likewise shall he that eateth Me
live by Me.
The words that I have spoken to you
are spirit and life.

AFTER THE GOSPEL

O Lord Jesus of Nazareth,
we have believed and have known,
with St. Peter and the disciples,
that Thou art Christ
the Son of God,
and that Thou alone hast the words of Eternal Life.
To whom then shall we ever go
but to Thee
for truth, for guidance and for life?
We trust Thy words because they are Thine,
all and every word we trust,
and not one here and there of our own choosing
to suit our taste and private judgment,
making ourselves and not Thee the final judge,
and our own faculty the standard and measure
of Thy Truth.
O save us ever from such perverse mistake!
Save us from being blinded to Thy whole meaning
by the brightness of some single utterance.
Let us not live on scraps and fragments
torn from the glorious pages of Thy Life,
but upon the Life itself in all its bearings,
teachings and implications,
on its total revelation,
on Thy Scriptures as a unity and a whole.
Amen.

Credo in Unum Deum

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God of God, light of light,
true God of true God.
Begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father:
by whom all things were made.
Who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, of the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
He was crucified also for us,
suffered under Pontius Pilate
and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures.
And ascended into heaven:
sits at the right hand of the Father.
And again He shall come with glory
to judge the living and the dead:
of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who together with the Father and the Son
is adored and glorified:
who spoke by the prophets.
And one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins.
And I await the resurrection of the dead.
And the life of the world to come.
Amen.

III

The Mystery of the Sacrifice

III

The Mystery of the Sacrifice

Suscipe Sancte Pater

OFFERING OF THE HOST

I lift up the eyes of my heart
and beseech Thee,
O Holy Father, Almighty Eternal God,
to take and accept
this pure unspotted Host,
which is about to become the Body of Thy Son,
which I Thy unworthy servant
offer to Thee, the living and true God,
for my innumerable sins, offences, negligences,
and for the people here present
also for all Christians living and dead,
that it may secure to them and to me
the salvation of Eternal Life.
Wherefore graciously permit me here and now
to place upon the paten together with the bread,
my life and all my love,
even my very self, to be made one with Jesus crucified.
May I be enclosed within His living Heart
as a grain of wheat is buried in the Bread,
and thus within Him through this Holy Mass
give and dedicate myself to Thee,
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

Deus qui humanæ Substantiæ

THE WINE AND WATER

O God who in creation didst marvellously fashion
our human nature,
and by redemption still more wonderfully
honour and ennoble it,
making it one with Thy Divine Son,
see in this Chalice—
in the mingling of water with pure wine—
an image of that oneness.
Grant that we may be
as inseparably one with Jesus
as this water is one with the wine;
and as the water is enriched by this union
so may our poor nature partake of
His perfection,
and be changed and deified
through union with His Divinity,
Who with Thee and the Holy Spirit
is One God for ever.
Amen.

Offerimus tibi Domine Calicem

OFFERING OF THE CHALICE

We offer Thee in this Mass, O Lord,
the Chalice of Salvation
first offered by Jesus at the Last Supper,
the Chalice of His Blood, the very Blood
that welled up from His Heart in agony,
that was drawn out by scourge and crown of thorns,
that was shed so copiously on the Cross.
With awe we humbly offer this saving Chalice,
beseeching Thy clemency,
that it may ascend as the fragrance of incense
in the sight of Thy Divine Majesty;
for our salvation and that of all the world.
Amen.

May we be admitted, O Lord, and received by Thee
in humble spirit with contrite hearts,
so that our part in this Sacrifice may please Thee
this day.
Come, O Almighty and Eternal God,
sanctify and bless this oblation
which we offer to the honour and glory
of Thy Holy Name.
Amen.

Suscipe Sancta Trinitas

Receive, O Most Holy Trinity,
this oblation which we offer to Thee
in memory of
the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension
of our Lord Jesus Christ:
and to the honour of His Mystical Body,
of the Blessed Virgin His Mother,
of St. John Baptist, of the holy Apostles,
of the saints whose relics are here,
and of all the saints,
that it may be to them a glory and joy
and to us Salvation.
May they plead our cause in heaven
and pray for us in this vale of tears,
that one day with them
we may rejoice with joy unspeakable,
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Orate Fratres

May the Lord receive this Sacrifice
even from our hands
to the praise and glory of His Name,
for our benefit
and for that of His holy Church.
Amen.

PREFACE TO THE ACT OF SACRIFICE

Totus Mundus exultat

UNITE ALL CREATURES TO YOURSELF

It is most meet and just
that every man should turn with grateful mind
to Thee
and lift his heart above the world
and fix it in Thy love,
Most Holy Lord, Eternal God,
Father Almighty.

It is most just and fitting and due
that I offer this Sacrifice not for myself alone
but on behalf of all Thy creatures,
of those especially that support my life.
They serve me that I may serve Thee.
They look to me to do duty for them,
to be their priest and deputy before Thee,
to express their homage and thanksgiving.
Wherefore now I gather to myself,
into the heart which I lift to Thee,
all creatures of the earth—
the air I breathe,
the sun by whose light I see
and by whose warmth I live,
the rain-clouds and the rivers,
the earth whereon I walk,
the fields whose fruitful produce
clothes and feeds me,
the cattle and the sheep
that live and die for me:

all these Thy creatures enter into my life
and count on me to express their thanks
and adoration.
Through me they lift themselves to Thee,
through me they hymn the glory of Thy Son,
through me and through this Holy Mass.
Would that I had the senses of Saint John,
his hearing and his vision,
who heard the hymn of all created life,
of every creature which is in heaven
and on earth and under the earth
and such as are in the sea,
as they sang together, saying,
" Benediction and honour and glory and power
to Him that sitteth on the throne
and unto the Lamb
for ever and ever."
Amen.

Cum Angelis et Archangelis

UNITE YOURSELF TO THE ANGELS AND SAINTS

I will lift up my heart from the dull earth
to the golden gardens of Paradise,
that seem so still, so vacant
and yet are thronged
with ardent and triumphant life—
with ten thousand times ten thousand
living presences,
moving in marshalled ministry
about the altar of the Lamb
in urgent adoration.
To that radiant sanctuary I lift my heart
and look and listen through the mysteries,
to the lightnings and the words and the thunders,
to the incessant music,
to the minstrelsy of angels and archangels,
to the myriad voices of the saints in choirs
answering and re-echoing one the other
across celestial spaces,
crying
day and night
(whether we sleep or wake, or notice it),
" Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts,
full are the heavens and the earth of Thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest."

With these I humbly ask to take my part,
to join my feeble voice,
answering, with all the Church on earth,
" Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty,
Who was and Who is and Who is to come.
Thou art worthy,
O Lord our God,
to receive glory and honcur and power
because Thou hast created all things.
Benediction
and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour
and power and strength
to our God,
for ever and ever, Amen."

Per Christum Dominum Nostrum

UNITE YOURSELF TO JESUS AND HIS CHURCH

It is most meet because of Thy mercy,
most just because of Thy claims,
most right and fitting because of Thy gifts and goodness,
likewise most salutary to us
to give thanks to Thee and praise Thee
always, everywhere, in all things,
Holy Lord, Father omnipotent, Eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord:
through Him,
in union with His whole Church,
wherein, throughout the world,
the thanksgiving and praise of this pure oblation
never ceases, day or night:
through Him
by whom all things are made,
and angels and archangels praise Thy Majesty:
through Him
with whom all the heavens conjointly
celebrate, in one accord, Thy Glory,
with united and grateful joy.
With this celestial choir
we humbly beseech Thee to command
that our weak voices be admitted
in suppliant confession, saying
Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord God of Hosts,
full are the heavens, full is the whole earth
of Thy Glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest

CANON. THE ACTION OF SACRIFICE

Te Igitur Clementissime Pater

OFFERING OF THE VICTIM

We humbly pray and beseech Thee,
most merciful and loving Father,
that, through Jesus Thy Son, our Lord,
Thou wouldst accept from our hands
and bless
this gift and pure oblation
of His most precious Body and Blood.
He is first Thy gift to us,
sent from Thy bosom, from Thy very Heart,
the only child begotten of the Godhead,
sent and given
because Thou didst so love this world.
He is become ours by Thy gift,
one of our race—
bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh—
but infinitely better than ourselves.
He is our best, and Thy most beloved.
By His own command
we confidently offer Him to Thee,
to acknowledge Thy sovereign dominion,
to atone for our forgetfulness of Thee,
to obtain pardon for our sins and negligences,
to praise and extol Thy goodness and power,
to render thanksgiving for Thy benefits,
and to obtain new blessings from Thy bounty,
all, all
through and with Jesus Thy Son our Lord,
our sweet Brother and Saviour,
whose Sacrifice we here offer to Thee.
Amen.

Memento

PRAY FOR ALL FOR WHOM CHRIST DIED

Remember, most gracious Lord,
and bless through this sublime Sacrifice
our Holy Father the Pope, all Bishops and priests,
also my parents, relatives, friends and neighbours,
that we may serve Thee in peace and holy love.
Remember likewise
all mothers and fathers, all servants and superiors,
that they may fulfil their duties because of Thee.
Remember in this sacrifice of Thine own and only Child
all children everywhere throughout the world
and grant that, like Thy Son, as they increase in years,
they may grow in grace and wisdom
before Thee and in the sight of men,
for the improvement and saving of the world.
Remember for Thy Son's sake
all those whose lot He shared on earth,
the poor, the workpeople, the lonely, the oppressed.
He is the man of sorrows,
gathering in Himself His people's griefs
and bearing all human burdens in His Heart.
He is sorrowful with the sorrowful,
hungry with those that hunger,
in pain with those who suffer pain.
His soul responds by sympathy and love
to every secret misery and silent agony,
His heart-beats are as echoes
to every pain and pang and cry of woe.
For His sake, O God! for His sake
whose life is one with ours,
let comfort and courage be carried everywhere
to every struggling soul,
by the ministry of Angels and of men,
from the copious treasuries of this Eternal Sacrifice,
wherein is all the hope of all mankind.

Communicantes

BE IN COMMUNION WITH THE SAINTS

I believe in the Communion of Saints:
in the fellowship and union
of souls in Heaven, in Purgatory and on earth.
I believe in the mystery and abiding miracle
whereby these separate spirits of three worlds
are brought together invisibly
into the one Body of Christ,
by His Holy Spirit diffused throughout them all.
It is through the faithful on earth
and through the Saints in Heaven
that I have been brought to Jesus Christ.
Without their fidelity and help, I should not know Him
whom to know is Eternal Life.
I thank them for their teaching and tradition,
I count upon their prayers,
I rejoice to be of their Body, mystic and immense,
whose head and heart and life-blood is Jesus Christ.

O all ye who in Heaven are gathered together
in life and love triumphant around the Lamb!
O all ye who follow Him whithersoever He goeth,
descend, come down with Him to this altar,
and crowd around in adoring choirs
to supplement our want of welcome, our cold devotion.
It gives us comfort and encouragement
to know that you are near—
you, our flesh and blood, who see face to face
the Mysteries
that are veiled to us.
Pray that we may beneath the appearance
see, love and adore the reality itself,
the sublime reality of this divine Sacrifice.
Amen.

Communicantes

BE IN COMMUNION WITH OUR LADY

O Mary, of all saints the first and Queen,
O Blessed Mother of Jesus,
who didst stand near His Cross
and by Thy presence and conformity of will
approving and seconding His act,
didst give Thy Son for our Redemption;
stand now by us
at this new Calvary here,
and approve and bless the sacrifice we make.
Pray that we may be purified,
commend us to Thy Son,
offer us, Thy younger children,
in union with Thy First-born JESUS CHRIST,
that together we may be
one oblation,
wholly pleasing to His Father,
Who through Him and Thee is also
our most loving and merciful
Father in Heaven.
Amen.

Quæsumus ut Corpus et Sanguis fiat dilectissimi Jesu

SUPPLICATIONS BEFORE THE CONSECRATION

I

Let down, O God, from heaven to earth,
from Thy high throne
to this lowly Altar,
Thy golden chain of love
whose every link is a fresh mystery.
Let down the mystic ladder of holy Faith
that we may climb to meet Thy love,
for without Thy help we cannot rise to Thee.
Come near, O God, and yet more near,
stretch out Thy Hand,
send forth Thy Holy Spirit,
that this Bread and Wine
may become the Body and the Blood
of Jesus of Nazareth,
Thy Beloved Son, our Saviour.
Amen.

II

O Wisdom of the Father,
Word of God,
proceeding from the lips of the Most High,
descend and teach us to be wise.
O Prince of Peace, our Saviour,
come down from on high,
deliver us from bondage
and the oppression of our sins.
O King of all the Nations,
longed for and expected in ages past
and longed for still,
draw near and hasten to our aid.
Come quickly, O Emmanuel, come.
Amen.

III

O Jesus, Brightness of Eternal Light,
Effulgence of the Father's Glory,
come forth from Thy dread splendour,
descend, we beseech Thee, from Thy high Throne,
descend and change this Bread into Thyself,
hiding Thy radiance lest we die.
Come down to us, O Lord, come down
nearer and nearer to our exile here,
into this valley of our death,
descending as a setting sun descends
and shines within the darkness,
lost to sight and sense.
Come, Sweet Jesus, come.
Amen.

IV

O Spring of day,
rise now before us as the sun at dawn,
diffuse Thy light invisible,
chasing all gloom and darkness from our minds.
O Source of Light and Life,
shine on us secretly
to warm and light our way,
as the sun when the day is overcast
still lights our world.
O Light that enlighteneth every man,
continue to illumine us,
that we may discern Thy presence here
and see
how the very veils that hide Thy face
reveal the meaning and the feeling of Thy love,
as clouds that veil the sun
display the wonder of its rays.
Amen.

AT THE SHOWING OF THE HOST

My Lord and my God!
My Lord and my God!
O Saviour Jesus Christ,
I greet Thy glad arrival here and now upon this altar.
I bid Thee welcome,
welcome to our earth again.
I will ask for nothing;
enough that I may meet Thee here
and hail and welcome Thee with all my heart.
Thou comest now unto Thine own,
Thine own receive Thee
in this new Bethlehem,
this house of Bread upon the altar
wherein
Thou dost renew the memory of Thy birth,
the mysteries of Thy Infancy,
Thy helpless, speechless, but appealing love,
Thy power in bonds,
Thy need of us,
Thy omnipresence gathered in a point.
In Bethlehem Thy Godhead lay concealed,
here Thy Manhood too lies hid;
both I adore,
and welcome Thee, my Jesus, Saviour,
Lord and God.
Amen.

AFTER THE SHOWING OF THE HOST

What is man that Thou shouldst be mindful of him,
or the child of man that Thou shouldst visit him?
Yet Thou dost rend the heavens and come down.
A child is born to us,
a son is given to us,
in whom dwelleth
all the fulness of the Godhead
bodily.
Into this Bread upon the altar
He is given and born anew.
And He is called Jesus
because He still saves us from our sins.
There is Salvation in no other, nor in ourselves.
The Father hath given all things into His hands,
who is now cradled upon the altar.
He is wonderful—Counsellor,
God the Mighty,
Prince of Peace,
Father, Sole-Parent, of the world to come,
the solitary source of our Eternal Life.
I adore, I welcome, I worship Him.
I bow down in body and soul, in mind and heart,
I yield myself to His immense love,
I open the arms of my soul to receive Him.
May His coming
bring Eternal Life to me.
Amen.

AT THE CONSECRATION OF THE CHALICE

Most gentle and all loving God, full of mercy,
let me not be,
like the Jews on Calvary,
thoughtless, unbelieving, dull
in presence of this Mystery
wherein is shown anew
the Crucifixion of Thy Son my Saviour.
Let me rather take part with Him
against the wicked world
and kneel before this altar
as Magdalen and St. John,
as our Lady His Mother
stood beneath the Cross.
Let me look on Him Whom my sins have pierced,
not indeed upon His Body's wounds now glorified,
but upon the actual anguish of His Heart,
His inward wounds that bleed within
with every new offence against Thy love.
O let the pleading of this Sacrifice
appeal to me and draw me,
as He foretold His lifting up would draw
all men to Himself,
and through Him to Thee, Eternal God,
most merciful Father of mankind.
Amen.

AT THE SHOWING OF THE CHALICE

O Jesus, Thou art a priest for ever,
and every day dost offer this sacrifice of Thyself,
whispering through the words of Thy ministers
"*This is the chalice of my blood.*"
This word is not an echo from the past,
not a voice from the dead,
but from Thyself, alive and present here,
a word effecting what it says,
a *deed* more than a word.

What then are Thy thoughts, sweet Jesus?
What Thy memories,
what the emotions of Thy heart
when the awful hour of Thy Passion
is thus revived and lives again?

What do those words mean to Thee?
What to Thy *Godhead*
whose eyes gaze ever upon Calvary,
seeing it as actual, as now?
What to Thy *Manhood*,
in whose most perfect faculties
so intense an hour as that on Calvary
can never be made dull by time?
It must live for ever fresh and vivid in Thy memory
and be as real and present
in its manifestation in the Mass
as in its first experience.
Even we in our poor memories can revive the past
and live through it again.
How much more Thou in Thy *unageing* life.
Therefore Thy suffering heart did institute the Mass
expressly that we with Thee might recall
and even be present at Thy Passion,
which is ever part of Thy abiding consciousness.
Amen.

AFTER THE SHOWING OF THE CHALICE

Would that I might share the insight of Thy saints,
their mystic vision of the *inward* Mass
that shows the travail of Thy Soul,
Thy Heart pierced through
with woes, like spears, innumerable,
Thy Body's wounds still bleeding inwardly.

Thus did the great St. Gregory see Thee,
Thus our martyr St. Thomas of Canterbury,
who standing at Thy altar
were stricken with Thy grief
and shed hot tears
as if they witnessed all the agony
of Thy first death on Calvary,
actual in Thy immortal life.

O let me, sweet Jesus, understand
the inwardness, the mystery of the Mass;
how it is a true and real sacrifice,
one with that of Calvary,
the same in every way
except that now Thy immortal Body
cannot shed its blood and die.
Yet if it could die again it would,
yes, on every altar and every time
Thy sacrificial words are uttered,
for they of themselves have power
to effect Thy death,
more power, in truth, than nails or lance,
to fill the chalice with Thy very Blood.

This, O Jesus, this
is what the Mass tells us of Thy long unwearied love,
O most gracious Saviour of mankind!
that since Thy Body's death could be but once,
Thou diest for us every day
in will, in spirit, mystically.

Amen.

Supplices te Rogamus

PRAY TO HAVE YOUR HEART IN HEAVEN

Upon Thy altar, O Lord God,
we have heaped up our gifts,
the things we cherish most—
our minds, our hearts, ourselves.
Grant, we beseech Thee, that
Thy Angel, our Mediator and Good Shepherd,
Jesus Thy Son,
may take these offerings to Himself,
and, upon His shoulders,
carry them to the altar on high
in the sight of Thy Divine Majesty.
There let them remain,
that we who partake of His Body and Blood
may ever be loyal citizens of Heaven
though in exile here;
ever obedient to its laws,
ever true to its standards,
ever sensible of its sweet attraction
and more conscious always that we belong
more truly to Heaven than to the Earth.
May a hunger and a home-longing lead us
safely through all the mazes of this world
into our Father's house at last,
where with Jesus and His saints
we may be at home and rejoice
with Thee for ever.
Amen.

FOR THE DEAD

Be mindful, O Lord, of Thy servants
who on departing this life
were found unfit to enter into Thy joy,
and are therefore now being prepared by suffering
for that final beatitude.
Grant that the claims of Thy justice
may be satisfied by His Holy Sacrifice,
and the debts of these helpless sinners be fully paid
by their loving Lord and Master,
Jesus Christ Thy Son,
the one Mediator of all mankind.
Amen.

FOR THE DYING

Remember also, most merciful and loving Father,
all who are sick and dying,
and grant
that in the solitude of suffering
each may truly "come to himself,"
and like the Prodigal may, if need be,
at last discover Thy love
and return to a Father's heart,
to that most bountiful Heart
that gave them joy of life and youth, hope and desire,
and from which all good and pleasant things,
all enduring comfort and true delight,
descend in such copious benediction.
Feed them before they die
with the Body and Blood of Thy beloved Son,
that nothing may be wanting to Thy love
nor to their Eternal Beatitude.
Amen.

IV

The Mystery of our Communion with God through the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ

IV

The Mystery of our Communion with God through the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ

Oremus

Not presuming on our own merits
but obeying the behest of our Blessed Lord,
whose Sacrifice we have here renewed,
we dare, and we do with confidence say
OUR FATHER,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
Amen.
Deliver us, we beseech thee, O Lord God,
from all evils, past, present, and to come:
and by the intercession of the
blessed and glorious Virgin, Mother of Thy Son,
grant us Thy mercy,
through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with Thee for ever
in the unity of the Holy Ghost.
Amen.

(*This liturgical preparation should be referred to our next Communion, whenever that may be.*)

Commixtio Corporis et Sanguinis

THE MINGLING OF THE BODY AND BLOOD

Help me, dear Jesus, to understand
the mystery of Thy Body and Blood,
seeming to our senses
separate and apart upon the altar,
divided as they were in death,
but now again united in the Chalice
and inseparably one,
as in Thy risen life.

Behold a mystic resurrection
following a mystic death,
in memory of Thy Easter victory.
Thus, sweet Jesus, Thou art pleased to pass
from sacramental death to sacramental life
and show Thyself alive upon the Altar,
triumphant over sin and hell,
our Mediator and High Priest for ever,
living always to make intercession for us,
that we may daily have Thy peace,
Thy peace here and now,
the gift and greeting of the Resurrection morn,
and hereafter
a glory and resurrection like to Thine.
Amen.

In Memoriam Resurrectionis

Beneath these rites and symbols
I behold, dear Jesus, Thy Resurrection,
the end and final act of Thy bitter Passion,
which with Thy birth and death
make one whole and complete work
whereby we all are saved.
Without the Passion, Thou wouldst not redeem us,
without the Resurrection Thy Passion were in vain.
I contemplate with joy
Thy victory over death.
I give Thee heartfelt thanks
that Thou didst leave the tomb,
the birthplace of Thy glory,
and show Thyself openly on earth
to many of good will.
Make my will good and show Thyself to me.
Rise in my heart and warm it with Thy love,
rise in my mind and light it with Thy truth.
Be Thou Thyself my Sun,
and let thy power expand in me the buds of virtue
lest my life be fruitless
like the barren fig-tree.
And let Thy Glorious Presence
be as a compelling and a controlling centre,
drawing me away from self
and holding me by the attraction of Thy love,
so that all my life may move harmoniously,
revolving daily in its orbit,
a willing satellite of Thee,
until at last Thou dost draw me
wholly and for ever,
into Thy eternal Life.
Amen.

Pax Domini

PRAY FOR PEACE WITH YOURSELF

O Lord God Almighty,
through this most Holy Sacrifice
which renews the memory of the Angels' song
at Thy Son's birth in Bethlehem,
and recalls His promise and bequest of peace
the night before He died,
and its actual gift on the day of His resurrection;
through this sublime worship
which in its prayers
sums up all blessings in the gift of peace,
listen to my petition.
I ask the grace of a threefold peace:
peace with myself,
with my neighbour,
with Thee.

With myself, in my own heart, I ask to be at one,
guided by clear and fixed and holy principles,
not troubled by conflicting aims
nor led by shifting whims and fancies,
nor disturbed by vain regrets or foolish fears;
nor perplexed by passionate desires
but tranquil, single-minded,
sincere and straight,
consistent with myself.
Give me, for Jesus' sake, such inward peace,
as comes of one chief aim and purpose
and consciousness of duty done.
I ask not for repose and idleness
but the active arduous peace
of poise and balance in a disordered world,
amid rival and conflicting influences.
Amen.

Pax Domini

PRAY TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH OTHERS

I ask for peace with all men,
" that the God of peace and of love may abide with me."
I would love my neighbour as I love myself
because of our one Father Who commands it,
because of Jesus our one Saviour,
and because of our common hopes and dangers,
all standing as we do together on the brink
of eternal weal or woe,
uncertain how many moments we still have
for pity and mutual help and love.
Let not my peace be self-contained and merely passive,
but make me a cause and a source of concord,
a peacemaker among men.
So may I merit to be called and to be Thy child.

I beg this spirit of overflowing and diffusive peace
through this august peace-giving Sacrifice
which may be offered only as a corporate and social act
in peaceful fellowship with all the household of Faith.
Bind me yet more closely to the brethren
by this union in prayer and sacrifice.
Prompt me to all the charities of active peace
till I be equal to the example and call of Jesus
who washed even the unclean feet of others
and gave His life for His enemies.
Let me suppress all personal assertive claims,
as He does in this Holy Eucharist,
wherein forgetful of His Own Honour
He seeks but to serve us
and minister to our peace.
Amen.

Pax Domini

PRAY FOR PEACE WITH GOD

And now I ask for peace
between me and Thee, my God,
through Jesus who brought peace to earth,
whose presence here is its bond and pledge,
and whose peace-giving Resurrection
I now see typified in the union
and co-mingling of the sacramental Species.
Give me, O patient tranquil God,
Thy peace through this Sacrifice,
Thy peace better than any pleasure,
profound and strong,
safe and secure
in every loss and pain and disappointment—
Thy peace
that passeth the world's understanding,
which no man can take from me and no man give,
since it rests not on fickle fortune
nor on human friends,
nor on esteem and recognition,
nor yet upon myself.
Thy peace, my God, I ask and beg—
The peace that follows the pardon of my sins
and is breathed into my inmost soul,
bidding me lean on Thee as on a rock
and trust in Thy caressing care
as infants trust their parents.

Let me then be to thee as a little child,
contented and uncritical,
and from moment to moment
adjust my life and submit my choice
to Thy Will and Thy permissions.

I will trust Thee all in all,
knowing it is Thy love that moves
the master-wheels of time,
that death remains Thy messenger,
taking orders only and alone from Thee,
that nothing can touch me but through Thy hands,
Thy hands that hold and cover me.
Seeing that Thy power is equal to Thy love,
Thy peace in me can never be disturbed
but by my choosing to let go Thy hand,
to break the bond between us,
and war against Thee by deliberate sin.

O Lamb of God, keep taking away my sins,
my daily sins and imperfections,
by this atoning sacrifice,
that I may never be at war with thee.
May I enjoy Thy peace, a peace like Thine on earth—
in poverty in Bethlehem,
in exile in Egypt,
in humility at Nazareth,
in agony on the Cross—
a peace untouched by any trouble
because of Thy glad submission
and deep filial trust in Thy Father's care.
O keep taking away my daily sins
by Thy daily Sacrifice;
that in spite of my sinful nature
I may ever live in peace with God,
and surrender myself to Him
by docile submission and obedience
to His will,
which is His love.
Amen.

Agnus Dei

LAMB OF GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US

I have offered Thy Body and Thy Blood,
O Lamb of God,
each apart, disjoined, divided as by death,
I have offered Thee a Victim slain by sin
to our Father in heaven and to Thy Father,
and I have prayed and prayed to Him,
pleading Thy Crucifixion
upon this new Calvary here.
And now, sweet Saviour Jesus,
I humbly turn to Thee—
to Thee risen from death ; glorified and present here—
and to Thyself
I now address my prayers,
bowing beseechingly,
striking my unworthy breast in penitence.
O Lamb of God
Who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
O Lamb of God
Who takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
O Lamb of God
Who takest away the sins of the world,
give us peace,
and prepare my soul to receive Thee worthily
now or in the near future,
and again most devoutly and lovingly
in the hour of my death.
Amen.

Qui tollis peccata Mundi

LAMB OF GOD, GIVE US THY PEACE

O Lamb of God,
slain from the foundation of the world
and here slain anew in mystery,
slain that we may live,
save us from all sin.
O Lamb of God,
here dumb and silent, opening not Thy mouth,
passive as before the shearer,
grant us, we beseech Thee,
that, as our bodies are warmed with wool of lambs,
so our souls may be clothed with Thy sanctity
and arrayed in Thy robes divine,
and our cold hearts warmed
in the garments of Thy grace.
O Lamb of God,
before whom in heaven the saints, ancient and new,
in thousands of thousands,
bow down discrowned, in adoration,
saying with loud voice,
" The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive
power and divinity and wisdom and strength and honour
and glory and benediction."
Accept our humble worship and thanksgiving,
and give us peace.
Amen.

Qui per mortem tuam Mundum vivificasti

PRAY THAT ALL MEN MAY SHARE THIS GIFT

O Lord Jesus Christ,
merciful to all mankind,
look now with eyes of pity
and compassion
upon the scattered multitude
who know not where to find the Bread of Life.
Hear the cry of their hesitating hearts
and the inarticulate pleading of their doubts,
listen to the mute appeal of their hunger,
and likewise pity those who are unconscious of their need.
O Thou the Shepherd of all souls,
bring the ignorant to know Thy Fold
and the proud to enter humbly in,
that all may be fed by this Bread from Heaven
which Thy under-shepherds,
the Bishops and Priests of Thy Church,
provide daily for our use
and sanctification.
Amen.

Pacem meam do Vobis

PRAY FOR UNION WITHIN THE CHURCH

O Lord Jesus,
so thoughtful of others, so forgetful of self,
who a few hours before Thy death
didst make Thy will
and bequeath to us Thy all,
put now that will into execution.
Thou hadst no earthly goods to give,
no money, no house, no possessions,
no garments even to dispose of
since these must go to Thy executioners.
Thou wast most poor—none ever poorer.
Yet before Thy death, at Thy last supper,
Thou didst make Thy will
and bequeath to the Apostles and to us
two most precious gifts—
Thy Peace
and Thy Presence—
Thy Presence, which is Thyself.

Let us here receive Thee into our lives,
that through Thee we may be all united
and Thy Church be ever free from disorder and dissension,
from pride and selfishness and greed
that destroy Thy peace.
Regard not our individual sins and unworthiness
but the faith and virtue of Thy Church,
and grant that all its members
may be united and knit together in the bonds of peace
by Thy power in this Holy Sacrament,
who livest and reignest God, world without end.
Amen.

Libera me per hoc Sacrosanctum Corpus

PRAY THAT COMMUNION MAY BE YOUR SALVATION

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
Who by the will of the Father
and the co-operation of the Holy Ghost
hast by Thy death given life to the world,
deliver me
by Thy Sacred Body and Blood
from all sin—
from evil of every kind;
grant me by this Sacrament abundant grace
to obey all Thy Commandments;
and never permit
that I be ever separated from Thee,
Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost
livest and reignest God,
world without end.
Amen.

Pro tua pietate prosit mihi

PRAY TO PROFIT BY THIS SACRAMENT

O Lord Jesus Christ,
though I be all unworthy,
let not
the reception of Thy Body
turn to my judgment,
but of Thy great goodness
grant that it profit and help me.
Let it be my safeguard and protection,
since Thou art my Guardian;
let it be the remedy and medicine of my soul's defects
since Thou art my Physician;
let it be the antidote to the second death
since Thou art Eternal Life.
May my frail body also share Thy immortality
and be raised incorruptible at the last day
through contact with Thee here
in this life-giving Sacrament.
Amen.

Domine non sum dignus

AN ACT OF HUMILITY

O Lord Almighty, all-holy God,
I am amazed at the condescension
of Thy glorious Majesty,
and with awe
I stop Thee at my very door,
saying with the Centurion:
Lord, I am not worthy,
I am not worthy
that Thou shouldst enter in.
This miracle of Thy love,
this love beyond all our thoughts,
so humbles and so shames me,
that with St. Peter I protest and pray:
"Depart from me, depart, O Lord,"
for my house is full of sin
and not worthy in any way
that Thou shouldst enter it.
Amen.

Tantum dic Verbo

AN ACT OF CONFIDENCE

But when I remember,
O most meek and merciful Jesus,
how Thou didst encourage
all timid and shrinking souls,
and how Thou didst enter the house
of Simon the Leper
and didst allow Magdalen
to keep on kissing Thy Feet,
and how Thou didst embrace
and take into Thy loving arms
children who were not baptized,
when I remember and ponder upon these many marks
of Thy gracious and sweet humility,
and recall too
that Thou didst choose for Thy birthplace
the cattle's stall,
and for Thy home a cottage,
and for refreshment the house of sinners,
I beseech Thee to pity me,
and by Thy power
to cleanse and enrich and beautify
the tiny ill-kept house of my soul,
and then—O then—
come and make Thy abode with me,
that, where once was sin,
there Thou mayst deign to dwell.
Lord, I am not worthy;
yet say but the word
and my soul shall be healed.
Amen.

Panem Celestem Accipiam

AN ACT OF COURAGE.

I will take this Bread come down from Heaven,
the Bread that is alive not dead,
that is the Living God in Person,
the Eternal Son, co-equal with the Father.
I will receive,
calling upon His Name,
casting myself upon His Mercy,
trusting His power and pity and devoted love
to cover my unworthiness.

My weakness and my need
are my best claim.
Needy and poor I come,
adoring, praising, giving thanks,
full of confidence, yet very humbly,
with soul athirst and hungry,
calling upon the Name of the Lord.
I will take, I will eat this Bread from Heaven,
this Living Bread
the Flesh and Blood of Jesus,
that saves us from all evil
and gives Eternal Life.
Amen.

(*Here receive our Blessed Lord either Sacramentally or Spiritually.*)

In propria Venit

HE COMES TO CLAIM HIS OWN

Thou art come, Lord Jesus, into my house,
the house of my soul,
I adore, I worship, I welcome Thee.
Thou art come
as long ago into the house
of Thy friends, the two sisters, at Bethany,
where Martha did try to entertain Thee
and Mary sat in silence at Thy feet.
Thou didst approve the silent one
more than the other.
Therefore for awhile I too will kneel silent
in Thy presence,
and not obtrude my words on Thee,
nor busy myself with many acts,
nor play the host to Thee as to a stranger.
Rather art Thou the Host and Master
and I Thy guest,
since Thou dost provide the banquet
and the house belongs to Thee.

Thou art nearer to me than to Mary,
closer and more intimate.
She, through her senses, sought Thee,
through hearing, sight and touch:
I am more privileged, more blessed,
who hold Thee within my soul.
Thou art so near I need not feel for Thee,
nor lay my hand in Thine,
nor look, nor listen, nor speak at all.
Thou art as close to me as I am to myself.

Not then as to a house of mine Thou comest,
not to the place and dwelling where I live,
but unto me myself,
to the innermost recesses of my soul
where no space, no intervening things keep us apart.
We both fill one place, one point, and are together
as separate colours blended
and diverse sounds in harmony,
as thought wedded with thought
and will with will.

Thou didst love Mary and forgive her sins
and explain her to herself and share her grief and joy.
What may not one hope for, whom Thou lovest?
And I, even I, am loved by Thee.
Of this I seek no further sign
than the fact of this amazing Sacrament.
Let then Thy Presence encompass me
and press within upon my mind and will
and keep and hold me awhile in silent adoration,
conscious of Thy astounding love.
Amen.

Habitabit in Nobis

HE ABIDES IN ME AND I IN HIM

How shall I understand, sweet Jesus,
what is happening to me,
what is being done in secret
behind the Sacramental veils,
below all my thoughts and feelings,
deeper than consciousness itself,
in the centre of my life,
within the very substance of my soul?

'Tis there, sweet Jesus, we meet,
beneath all surfaces and sounds and shapes of things,
unseen, unheard, unfelt,
Thou and I,
substance with substance,
deep calling unto deep,
my nothingness to Thy infinitude,
my feebleness to Thy strength.

I need not to see Thy beauty,
nor to feel Thy presence,
nor even to picture or imagine Thee.
Thou art beyond all our imagining,
no object now of mortal sense.
Thy Body lives in that higher world and state
that has the freedom of the universe,
and owes no obedience to material laws,
but like free thought is where and how it wills to be.

Though hidden, silent, and unfelt,
Thou art, dear Lord, in this sweet Sacrament, my hope,
Thou art my strength,
Thou art my joy,
the object of my deepest love,
the answer to all questionings.
Thou art the anchor of my soul,
steadfast and sure
beneath the troubled sea of life.
Thou art my refuge, my solace, my soul's rest,
my Lord, my God, my all.
From Thee comes all that soothes our life,
happiness and goodness here on earth,
and in the world to come
when after a little while I see Thee face to face
(Thee whom now I have within me)
the vision will bring ecstasy
and eternal bliss.
Amen.

Dedit eis Potestatem filios Dei fieri

HE GAVE THEM POWER TO BECOME SONS OF GOD

Through the mystery of this Holy Sacrament
Thou art, most sweet Jesus, far more to me
than a messenger with gifts from heaven,
more than a gracious guest
who bears with my distressing poverty,
more than a companion to comfort me,
more than a lover who defies my coldness.
Yea, Thou art more even than God and Lord of all
descending from on high to receive my homage,
and listen to my prayers and bless me.
Thou dost sink far lower than all this,
O Thou tremendous lover of mankind!
humbling Thyself to the dust in self-effacing service
beyond the washing of soiled feet,
or the serving at a menial's table.
Thou dost go to the extreme of humble love,
making Thy Body my daily bread
and Thy Blood my drink,
to feed and nourish me
with Thine own living Flesh,
yea, with Thine own life-giving substance
even as a mother nourishes,
or as a loving pelican
that gives its blood to feed its young,
and its life that they may live.
So am I, in truth, become a child of God,
having in me a divine life
through Communion with Thee.

O may this Blessed Sacrament intensify and increase in me
Thy Eternal Life and immortality!
Let the Bread of Thy Body
strengthen and sanctify my soul;
and the Wine of Thy most precious Blood
purify my conscience more and more,
and give me zest and fire and joy of heart
in a life of boundless Charity
through Faith and Hope;
and let the touch of Thy risen Body
immortal and glorious
be to my mortal flesh
the pledge of Resurrection.
May Thy Spirit, O Jesus, pass into and act in mine
as sunbeams penetrate the plants
and build them up,
and warm them into bloom and fruit.
Amen.

Quid Retribuam Domino?

THE FRUIT OF THE TREE OF LIFE

Thou art, sweet Jesus, the Tree of Life,
Thou art the Mystic Vine,
and I a branch and one with Thee,
as branch and tree are one.
Would that I might understand this unity
and my need of Thee and my dependence,
also Thy presence in my soul,
which extends and spreads Thy Incarnate Life
and continues it in me.

A branch apart can bear no fruit,
nor even keep itself alive,
it must be fed by the flow of sap
continuously.
So is it, Lord, between Thee and me.
Cut off from Thee I can do no good,
practise no Christian virtue.
Thy spirit must run into and possess
all the channels and fibres of my life
to reinforce and sanctify my earthly nature.
Thy power must mingle with my poverty of soul
unceasingly
as nutriment and vital sap,
that I may say with truth,
" Now not I live, but Christ lives in me."

I have learned, O Jesus, what Thy life means,
and tasted of its ripest, sweetest fruit.
I have seen the pattern and example,
in Bethlehem, in Nazareth and on the Cross,
of what Thou wouldst produce in me.
How can I ever lead a life like Thine!
How shew such fruit of virtue
in childlike submission and self-sacrifice!
Thy example would leave me helpless, in despair,
if Thou didst not daily add,
through this most blessed Sacrament,
Thy strength, Thy energy, Thy fertile power.
O fill each faculty as full as it can hold of Thee,
that virtue may not be a burden and a task
but as the life-blood in my veins.
Then let me never
by any crookedness or opposition check
the inflow of Thy Divine vitality,
or hinder its manifestation in my defective faculties.
Let me submit with docile obedience
to the pruning-knife of Thy Providence,
and to the discipline of Thy Church,
lest I come to dishonour or discredit
Thy gracious inward influence
which subjects itself so humbly to my lead
and serves my will,
and while it feeds, would transform and change
me, in some sort, into Thee.
Amen.

Corpus Domini Nostri Jesu Christi Custodiat animam meam

HE WILL GUARD AND KEEP AND GUIDE ME

Thou art the Head,
and I a member, a limb of Thee.
This is Thy word, my Jesus,
to explain the nature of the Communion
between my soul and Thee.
Thou wouldst have me understand
that as the body's limbs have
life, purpose, and useful service from the head,
so my life
from Thee has meaning and a worthy end.
I was born into this world for this,
to meet with Thee and from Thee learn
the meaning of myself.

By union with Thee my life is lifted high
above mere human aims,
to share Thy purpose and serve Thy ends,
to be Thy instrument and willing tool,
an organ and channel of Thy life.
As our hands and feet serve our mind
and are exalted and honoured by the service,
so should I serve Thee.

Because Thou art the Head,
Thou art also the seat of wisdom and authority;
therefore I look to Thee to direct my steps,
to hold me to my duties,
to protect, defend, provide for me.
I will trust Thee wholly,
as the body trusts the mind,
and putting away all anxious reasonings,
will submit, moment by moment, in all things
to Thy wisdom and will.

My life is not my own, that I should dispose of it;
it belongs to Thee in many ways.
By creation it depends on Thee as breath on breathing;
by redemption it is saved by Thee from sin
as a slave is freed from slavery.
Here by Communion it is united to Thee,
taken into Thyself to share Thy Eternal Life.

May then my self-seeking, wayward self
be checked and ruled by Thee in this Sacrament;
and by the ministry of Thy living Church,
that my thoughts, my sympathies, my tastes
may accord with Thine,
and my heart beat in unison with Thy Sacred Heart,
and all my consciousness be full of Thee.
Draw and receive and hold me
as the summer sun drinks up a drop of rain
as the ocean gathers to itself a streamlet
so that together they are one.
Amen.

(*These prayers may be used also with reference to past Communions, the effects of which remain in the reality and abiding fact of union with Jesus Christ.*)

Deo Gratias

THANKSGIVING

My sweet Jesus
I would have a thankful,
a grateful heart,
whatever else I lack.
Bestow this most becoming grace on me
through the Eucharistic Sacrifice
in which I have taken part.
Thou didst thank Thy Father daily
for all the simple joys of life—
for life itself,
for Thy Mother's love and St. Joseph's care,
for Thy strength to labour
and Thy power to teach;
for the flowers and the birds and the beasts,
for the beauties of the earth and sky;
but
in the hour of Thy humiliation,
on the night before Thy bitter death,
foreseeing all Thy agony and crucifixion,
Thou didst then thank Him *most*,
thank Him to the full
by appointing a Eucharist, a Thanksgiving
to be the perpetual Memorial
of Thy life and work and death on earth.
O let me through this holy Eucharist
express my heartfelt thanks
for the gifts of earth,
for the hope of heaven,
for all things comforting and bright;
also for all dark or perplexing blessings
of Thy Father's providence.

Let me thank Him most and above all
that out of His great love
He sends Thee to us anew each day,
from heaven to our sinful world,
to intervene on our behalf,
to feed us with Thy Body and Blood,
and unite us with Thyself
in these most high and holy mysteries.

Would that all earth-bound minds and hearts
might know the truth and break their bonds
and fly to Him through Thee!
Would that all whose souls are cold and dead
might draw near Thy fires
and warm them back to life,
that so the divine Love
which stretched out its arms to all on Calvary
and holds them open hourly in the Mass
may at last be satisfied.
Amen.

Vidimus Gloriam Ejus

We have seen His glory.

AT THE BALLANTYNE PRESS
PRINTED BY SPOTTISWOODE, BALLANTYNE AND CO. LTD.
COLCHESTER, LONDON AND ETON, ENGLAND

BX 2230 .R6 1918 SMC

Roche, William.

Mysteries of the mass in
reasoned prayers /
AWU-5409 (sk)